

The First Fifteen Years

The History of the
Founding of George Wythe College

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George Wythe College
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“The ones who come out on top
are the ones who have been trained
in the hardest school.”

—Thucydides

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Introduction

This is the definitive history of George Wythe College (GWC). I have made every effort to ensure accuracy, but apologize now for any error that I have unintentionally passed on. The purpose for studying history is manifold; my purpose for telling and making available this history is to chronicle for present and future generations the drama, sacrifice and deliberate intention that went into the founding of this institution.

When considering George Wythe College as an institution of post secondary education in the 21st century, one must keep in mind its utterly unique birth and subsequent development. Here is an institution of higher learning that was begun with no funding of any kind, and a no-debt policy from its inception. As GWC has never been regionally accredited it is a wonder that it has been able to keep its doors open and actually grow; and this in spite of the fact that it has no federal or state endorsement, no independently owned campus until January of 2005, no endowment (short of very generous but limited private donations) and no government subsidies. There is not an institution of higher learning of which I am aware that can boast such frugality.

When considering George Wythe College as an educational process, some explanation is in order. To honestly assess the value of a George Wythe College education we must identify and acknowledge a number of points:

1. The desired objective of any specific educational institution.
2. The most effective manner to accomplish that end.
3. The educational needs of society.

The desired objective of any specific educational institution must be the guiding light, the central focus and goal of the institution. When the small colleges of the American Founding were created, the educational establishment in Europe laughed, then attacked, then began to emulate. In the 1940's, Robert Hutchins faced this same type of ridicule from the American educational establishment when he pioneered the classical approach at the University of Chicago. First he was ignored, then ridiculed, and finally emulated by various Great Books programs around the United States. Hutchins argued that there are four possible central purposes for a university:

1. Liberal Education – training citizens and leaders for the nation.
2. Academic Education – training researchers and professors for the universities.
3. Professional Training – preparing students with specific work skills for the marketplace.
4. Political Education – training government and quasi-governmental workers for the state.

Hutchins taught that all schools in general share these goals, but that every college chooses one primary purpose—to the neglect of the other three. Indeed, the history of American higher education might be accurately summarized as a focus on Liberal Education from 1780-1860, Academic Education from 1860-1940, Professional Training from 1940 to around 2020 (if the cycle continues), and the growth of Political Education after 2020.

Hutchins, a witness to the decline of liberal education, offered a simple remedy: a few schools in every generation, even just one or two, must choose liberal education. This is the focus of George Wythe College. It was founded for this purpose, and intends to serve in this capacity for the remainder of the 21st Century. To further make this point, I recommend an excellent book published in 1998 by Major General (now Lieutenant General) Josiah Bunting, former superintendent of the Virginia Military Institute, entitled *An Education for Our Time*. It is a modern classic in its own right.

The most effective method of accomplishing the objective of any school differs, depending on the institution's central purpose. If the central purpose is liberal education—the training of citizens and leaders for the nation, for the future of freedom and for statesmanship—then the methods are very different than if the school has another purpose, such as professional training. In a day when professional training is the most popular, classical methods are criticized by some and misunderstood by most. The “old” schools get to define what credibility is, so no truly unique or innovative approach can be credible on their terms. Still, if your purpose is liberal education, as it is at George Wythe College, the most successful methodology is the time-tested system we call the Five Pillars of Statesmanship; namely, classics, mentors, simulations (George Wythe himself called them “mock congresses” or “mootings,” and he was the first professor in America to use them), field experience (a mixture of travel study, internships, and entrepreneurship), and God. These 5 Pillars are the foundation of George Wythe College. In contrast with the popular professional training model so predominant today, these Five Pillars can seem strange—even archaic, but history attests that they are indispensable to prosperity and sustainable freedom.

This brings us to *the educational needs of society*. I have no doubt that most people will greatly benefit from the high quality of professional training schools in the United States, Canada, Europe and elsewhere. But is there a place for a few small dedicated schools that train citizens and statesmen? I am convinced, along with the Founding generation and many of the leading scholars of our modern world (Robert Hutchins, C.S. Lewis, Mortimer Adler, Leo Strauss, Jacques Barzun, Russell Kirk, Allan Bloom, E.D. Hirsch, among others), that there is more than a place for it—that there is, in fact, a vital necessity for colleges of liberal education. George Wythe College makes no claim to be right for everyone; but it boldly asserts that there are few if any schools with a better educational system for the preparation of future citizens and statesmen. **Society needs schools like George Wythe College.** And since the mentoring method requires schools of this caliber to be quite small, two dozen such colleges would not fill the need.

Finally, there are many who assisted in bringing about this institution and I would be ungrateful if I did not recognize them: Dr. Jeff Burnsed of Coral Ridge Baptist Church; Dr. William Doughty, former Director of the Institute for Constitutional Education; Mrs. Carolyn Doughty; Dr. W. Cleon Skousen, a leading expert on the writings of the American Founding generation; Mrs. Kathy Sills; Mr. Ken Krogue; Mrs. Jodie Palmer; Mr. Shawn Ercanbrack; Dr. Andrew Groft and Leslie Groft; Dr. Julie Earl; Dr. Troy Henke and Katy Henke; and of course the founders of George Wythe College, Oliver and Rachel DeMille and Dr. Donald N. Sills. Many others will be mentioned in the history. There have also been many donors and contributors who have helped make George Wythe College grow; I have chosen not to mention them by name as many of them have asked to remain anonymous. You know who you are; thank you so much for your generosity and role in building statesmen.

Note that I have not written this history in a strict chronological order, rather I have followed the various plot lines needed to narrate the account in a meaningful way. I personally witnessed most of what is written here, and I have spoken with dozens of others who were also first-hand witnesses. I have interviewed all of the main characters in the story. The truth is that few will realize how unique the founding of this school really is; though I believe that ten decades from now the amazing contribution of individuals who have received this type of education will speak for itself. In the meantime, while some may be at odds with the type of education espoused herein, many will find the timeless principles of a superb liberal education both refreshing and timely. It is my conviction that the contribution of George Wythe College will play an important role in the world of the 21st Century.

Shanon Brooks
Cedar City, Utah
June, 2006

I. The Founders

Youth

In spite of childhood learning disabilities that delayed his reading, Oliver DeMille became a highly motivated young man. He grew up in the small rural community of Hurricane, Utah, where he learned agrarian values along with a farming work ethic. More often than not, he applied the work ethic to reading rather than farm work, much to the chagrin of his two brothers. Although raised in a typical low middle class home, he found stability in the affection of his family and devotion to their religion.

At a Hugh O'Brian youth leadership conference, young Oliver gained a sense that he needed to receive a world-class education and that his personal mission would be to promote liberty and good government worldwide. This vision informed his choices, as he would have many prospects to consider. As a high school student he was often recognized for his gifts as an athlete, a leader and a scholar. In his senior year he was awarded the Regional Sterling Scholar Award in the General Category (a state-wide scholarship competition with two recipients each year)—recognizing his exemplary accomplishments across the board, including Math & Science, Physical Education, Social Science, Fine Art, Leadership, etc. Oliver subsequently was offered scholarships to a number of universities. After seriously considering West Point and the Air Force Academy along with other state and private universities, he accepted a four-year Air Force ROTC full ride scholarship, and decided to use it at Brigham Young University. After a year of college, he served a two-year religious mission in Barcelona, Spain.

The College Years

In the days following his return from Spain, Oliver was invited by a family friend to attend a seminar on the principles of good government offered by The Institute for Constitutional Education. This organization has since closed its doors, but at that time, being occupied with returning to his college studies, a two-day seminar on the Founding Fathers intrigued him. The relationships that began at that seminar would figure greatly in his education and in the fulfillment of his personal mission for years to come.

In addition to his regular studies, there were ROTC duties to attend to. The Air Force is a highly technical service with virtually all of its scholarship recipients having some sort of application in engineering, mechanics, or some aspect of flight crew. But Oliver's interest was political science and pre-law, and he received a rare non-technical scholarship to allow

him to pursue that field of study. He intended to become an intelligence officer, and his experience with the Air Force gave him invaluable training in leadership, diplomacy and military strategy. He attended the various required trainings, camps, and other corps events during his time at BYU, and received a minor in Aerospace Studies when he graduated.

Though Oliver had begun his college career studying political science, along the way he discovered that the International Relations major seemed to most fully meet his interests. He valued greatly the associations he had at BYU's David M. Kennedy Center, and developed fond memories of classes from Dr. Fry, Dr. Hollist, Dr. Vetterli, and Dr. Galbraith, among others. He often took the opportunity to request extra readings from some of the fine faculty at BYU and was exposed to many great individuals. Nonetheless, as his time at BYU drew toward a close, he found that he did not have the depth and breadth of experience and understanding that he had imagined would come with the completion of this important milestone. Over time, he could no longer deny the nagging feeling that he must make pro-active choices to make up for these deficits in his education, or miss out on important opportunities later.

He spent hours reading the various bulletin boards around campus, studying flyers about internships, extra classes, travel study and visiting lectures. The Kennedy Center's visiting lectures were fascinating—Oliver rarely missed one. As he listened to some of the leading theorists and practitioners in international leadership, he felt even more acutely the gap between his textbook education and the true depth and quality of education that would be needed to really make a difference.

Perhaps the ultimate catalyst to a fateful decision occurred when he was honorably discharged for medical reasons from the Air Force before having the opportunity to serve as an officer. With less than three semesters left to complete his degree, and his obligation to the military completed, Oliver found that his future was now completely unwritten, and it was his prerogative to do what his heart had been hinting at for some time. In his own words:

I had spent several months researching law schools and graduate schools, all to no avail. I had read Dr. Skousen's *The Making of America*¹ and was fascinated by the chapter on Jefferson's education. I was particularly moved by his association with George Wythe, which he considered both foundational and pivotal in his young life. Wythe's methods were unique, and the results were outstanding. I wanted that kind of an education, so I set out to find a school where I could study under a Wythe like Jefferson did.

¹ W. Cleon Skousen. 1985. *The Making of America: The Substance and Meaning of the Constitution*. Washington D.C.: The National Center for Constitutional Studies.

The passage from *The Making of America* that Oliver read included:

Professor Small also introduced Jefferson to the famous George Wythe, who would later sign the Declaration of Independence and serve at the Constitutional Convention. Wythe (pronounced With) was the first law professor in America and later had a tremendous influence on Jefferson's study of law.

For some time Governor Fauquier, George Wythe, and Professor Small had been meeting each week for dinner and philosophical discussions. Now they included young Thomas Jefferson. 'At these dinners,' Jefferson later recalled, 'I have heard more good sense, more rational and philosophical conversations, than in all my life besides.'

It was the greatest stroke of good fortune that Thomas Jefferson had the opportunity to be accepted by George Wythe as a protégé for the study of law. The two got along famously. Wythe thought a well trained lawyer should know just about everything and Thomas Jefferson had the appetite for it.

He studied not only the law, but also languages, physics, agriculture, mathematics, philosophy, chemistry, anatomy, zoology, botany, religion, politics, history, literature, rhetoric, and virtually every other subject imaginable—always recording quotations and observations in his personal notebooks. Jefferson called this 'a time of life when I was bold in the pursuit of knowledge, never fearing to follow truth and reason to whatever results they led.'

He had an amazing aptitude for languages so that by adulthood he could read Latin, Greek, Spanish, Italian, and Anglo-Saxon. In addition to his mastery of the spoken word in his own tongue, he became very fluent in French.

During these days of intensive study in Williamsburg, which was the dominion capital, he occasionally broke away to hear the debates in the House of Burgesses. On May 29, 1765, a newly elected member of the assembly named Patrick Henry rose to give his famous oration against the Stamp Act. This is the speech in which he said, 'If this be treason, make the most of it!' Jefferson was there. He says:

I attended the debate [standing] at the door of the lobby of the House of Burgesses, and heard the splendid display of Mr. Henry's talents as a popular orator. They were great indeed; such as I have never heard from any other man. He appeared to me to speak as Homer wrote.

Something remarkable happened to Thomas Jefferson that day. As he stood listening intently to Patrick Henry's eloquent denunciation of the abuses that were being heaped upon the American colonies, it kindled a flame in his soul. He felt such a surge of fervor for the cause of freedom and justice that the flame burned

brightly the rest of his days. He later referred to this day as the most important day of his life.

In early 1767, Jefferson was brought before the General Court of Virginia for the oral examination to gain admittance to the bar. He was being sponsored by George Wythe, Virginia's foremost legal authority. Since most lawyers submitted themselves to the bar examination after little more than six month's preparation, Jefferson's erudite young mind created quite a stir among the judges that day. No matter what subject, he seemed to know more than they did. It must have pleased George Wythe to see his brilliant pupil respond to the penetrating questions from the gentlemen on the bench.²

Oliver later commented on his reaction to this passage:

I couldn't seem to find such an educational opportunity anywhere. I wanted a George Wythe education, the kind Jefferson had, and I wasn't willing to settle for anything less. None of my professors had any suggestions as to what to do; they either tried to direct me to more 'modern' types of scholarship (with a more focused specialization) or they recommended a few experts outside the university system who might help me. Interestingly, one of the names recommended several times was Cleon Skousen. Since the concept had come from his book, and I had heard him speak, I mustered enough courage to find his number in the phone book and call him.

I told him I wanted a George Wythe education and couldn't find a school to do it and asked him to mentor me. I told him I had some money saved for graduate school and I would gladly pay him. His response was immediate, 'Oh, no, you won't need to pay me. You'll spend all your money on the books you'll need.' I knew then I had come to the right place.

Oliver spent the next several years concurrently studying at BYU and reading assigned classics under the direction of Dr. Cleon Skousen and Dr. Donald N. Sills, another mentor he met through his association with Dr. Skousen.

One day after one of their many discussions, Dr. Sills told Oliver of a school where he could have a mentor and a study program that would take him in depth into the educational history and philosophy of the American Founding Fathers. This program at Coral Ridge Baptist University (a ministry of Coral Ridge Baptist Church of Jacksonville, Florida) was not regionally accredited, but Oliver didn't hesitate for a moment. He knew full well that an accredited, respected degree with prospects for prestigious graduate programs were within his reach through the BYU program he had all but completed with a 3.89 GPA. And although that was the path he had imagined in his youth, he knew in his heart that it did not lead where he needed to be. Before completing his undergraduate

² Ibid. 19-20.

degree, he walked away from BYU as well as an exciting internship he had just been awarded with the Atlantic Council, working directly with NATO. Instead, he began an intensive study of the classics and the educational process that produced the Founding Generation of Scholars and Statesmen. Although many wondered at the wisdom of his choice, he made it deliberately, knowing that a truly quality education would never be a hindrance. Oliver wanted the real thing, not just the appearances of credibility. And he has never regretted it—in fact, he counts it as one of the defining decisions that continues to bless his life to this day. He did eventually complete his BYU degree, but first he set out to get a Thomas Jefferson style education.

The educational experience with his Coral Ridge mentors was a whole new level of challenging study. Dr. Sills and Dr. Jeff Burnsed were both Baptist ministers, and Dr. Skousen was a long-time religious author and political researcher. Dr. Sills believed that the Bible was the foundation of American freedoms, and that one of the most fundamental freedoms was the freedom of religion. Dr. Sills had made a career out of supporting religious freedom in the U.S. and in a number of other nations, openly supporting the rights of churches he didn't agree with doctrinally, including the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, known as the Mormons, and the Unification Church, known as the Moonies. This had lost Dr. Sills some of his support in the Baptist community, but he was willing to stand for what he believed even when it cost him relationships and financial security. Dr. Sills had been a minister for over twenty-five years when he began mentoring Oliver, and his deep knowledge of the Bible and his belief that it was closely interconnected with the American founding and modern religious freedom made him an excellent mentor.

For the first time, studying with a book in one hand and the Bible in the other, Oliver devoured history, economics, science, government, math, law, human relations, and business. Although he had always been an amateur student of scripture, in LDS seminary while growing up and in religious classes at BYU, he had never engaged in this type of Founding Fathers education. Dr. Sills also tied everything to current events, drawing on his extensive travel, international diplomatic work with two U.S. Presidents and numerous religious freedom institutions. Dr. Skousen, who was one of the leading experts in the world on the writings of the American Founders, likewise suggested deep studies of the Bible along with Montesquieu, Hume, Blackstone, Locke and many others.

The workload was intense. Oliver had been a good student at BYU, but with Coral Ridge he typically studied over eighty hours a week, sometimes more. With this intense study, he earned a B.A. in Biblical Studies and an M.A. in Christian Political Science. As good as the BYU studies had been, the Coral Ridge learning was truly great, much more challenging than anything he had ever done or seen. He later set out to make George Wythe College even more challenging, if that were possible. Studying with Coral Ridge, DeMille felt that he was finally getting the truly superb education he had longed for.

After experiencing such a high quality study program, he began looking closely at other non-traditional schools. In time, he earned a Juris Doctorate degree, from La Salle University in Louisiana. “I wanted to understand the history of case law,” he said, “to know the cases really well, not to practice law but because the Judicial Branch is a whole segment of American history and also of America’s future.” Oliver, later comparing his experience of Coral Ridge to that of LaSalle, said “it was like night and day”; he ranked the program at La Salle very poor.

It was during this time that Oliver made two glaring mistakes. First, in his search for educational opportunities he sent in an application to the Technical Institute of Biblical Studies (TIBS) in Las Vegas, Nevada along with a number of other schools of various types. The institute accepted him into the program, requested an initial payment of about \$1,500 and promised to send him the study material. He carefully looked over the outlined curriculum plan, filled out the application, including the requested list of all writings and life experience, and sent the payment. A diploma came in the mail. DeMille was surprised, called the school and asked for a transcript. When it came, it showed credit for all his life experience, papers he had written and submitted, but the diploma had been mailed without any study requirements. He never received any coursework or a refund. It was an expensive lesson on a tight student budget. He was disappointed not to get the further studies he had anticipated, but rationalized that he had at least done all the work, so he added the degree to his resume. A year later, instead of giving him the refund he desired, the school representative called and asked if he wanted to open a branch in Utah, claiming he could make good money by advertising degrees and then just awarding them for whatever people sent in. DeMille was incensed. Embarrassed to have been personally duped, he immediately cut off all communication with them, took the degree off his resume, tore up the diploma and threw it away. He hadn’t been impressed with LaSalle’s program, but they had at least required serious study and he had learned a lot about jurisprudence.

Young Oliver experienced the very best and the very worst of non-traditional education: the poor curriculum and systems of La Salle, the immoral and probably illegal program of the Technical Institute of Biblical Studies, and the truly excellent education he gained by distance studies with local mentors through Coral Ridge. He considered them all carefully in the creation of George Wythe College. He drew from his experience at BYU, choosing a liberal education instead of the BYU professional educational model, wanting to make George Wythe College even better than what he experienced in his Coral Ridge studies, and of course totally rejecting the models offered by La Salle and Technical Institute. He also learned about diploma mills, and that the market doesn’t support truly low quality programs—both the Technical Institute and La Salle were later legally shut down.

His second big mistake was to publish a book entitled *Christ versus Satan: The New World Order*. This youthful study of conspiracy, written while he was a student at BYU, was actually a valuable research project for Oliver. He learned all the conspiracy lingo, closely analyzed what parts of it held some truth and what was mostly speculation and even just

plain sensationalism. He felt strongly that he shouldn't publish it, but gave in to a desire to get the message out—he thought in his youthful exuberance that he had stumbled onto something that everyone needed to know. “Zeal without knowledge,” he would later call it, quoting a favorite scholar. Years later he said, when asked by an audience about conspiracy, “of course there are some people in the world who meet behind closed doors and conspire to do things that are wrong in order to increase their power and riches, and of course they don't control the whole world and they aren't behind every little detail. The important things that get done in this world are done by those who build, not those who bash. Let's be builders, not bashers.”

In short, he was introduced to many types of education, the good and the bad, and came to see the high quality of close mentoring, reading the greatest classics, and including God in the curriculum. Once he had made the decision to leave the mainstream accredited private university where he had worried about the lack of true depth, he literally poured himself into his non-traditional Coral Ridge studies.

Education of the Founding Era

Historically, liberal education was the standard in America from the time Harvard opened its doors in 1636, to the Common Schools advocated by Horace Mann in the 1850's. For over two hundred years, American education rose from the foundation of religion and liberty. It wasn't until the Industrial Revolution (early 1900's for the U.S.) that the modern conveyor belt education, focused on job and career training, became the norm. This change, however, did not go unnoticed. In 1892, the four-hundredth anniversary of Columbus's discovery of America, many of the teacher unions in America joined together in a great celebration. The result of this coalition was a Book of Remembrance that detailed the legacy of education in America from its inception. It is important to remember that this was also the beginning of a shift in America towards compulsory education, including a move towards more secular curricula. These changes are reflected in a paragraph from their book:

Whether this was wise or not (shifting to compulsory education) is not our purpose to discuss, further than to remark, that if the study of the Bible is to be excluded from all state schools, if the inculcation of principles of Christianity is to have no place in the daily program, if the worship of God is to form no part of the general exercises of these public elementary schools, then the good of the state would be better served by restoring all schools to church control.³

Most of the colleges and universities of the day shared this sentiment. The need to teach young and old alike their duty as citizens was voiced by many American educational

³ (Barton, David. 1992. *Education and the Founding Fathers*. 1 videocassette (60 min.) videorecording. Aledo, Tx. WallBuilders)

leaders. John Witherspoon, the President of Princeton University (at that time the College of New Jersey) stated in a collection of his writings, *Works of John Witherspoon*, that:

He is the best friend to American Liberty who is most sincere and active in promoting true and undefiled religion, and who sets himself with the greatest firmness to bear down on profanity and immorality of every kind. Whoever is an avowed enemy to God, I scruple not to call him an enemy to his country.

As with European universities and colleges, the movement to found and support colleges and universities in early America was led by religion. Of the first 126 American institutions of higher learning, 123 were founded on Christianity. Unlike European universities and colleges, the religious thrust was toward individual “piety, civility and learning”, rather than positioning to have a share in the control of the state. Mary-Elaine Swanson, author of *The Education of James Madison*, said it well:

If education has merely imparted certain skills but has not opened up the students mind to consider the deepest questions of life – Who is God? Who Am I? What is my purpose in life? – then it has failed.⁴

Harvard College, founded in 1636, whose alumni include John Adams, Samuel Adams and John Hancock, required the following of its students:

Let every student be plainly instructed and consider well that the main end of his life and studies is to know God and Jesus Christ and therefore to lay Christ in the bottom as the only foundation of all sound knowledge and learning. Everyone shall so exercise himself in reading the Scriptures twice a day that he shall be ready to account of his proficiency therein.⁵

Yale, founded in 1701, the college attended by William Johnson and William Livingston (both signers of the United States Constitution), solicited itself as “...a college for the liberal and religious education of suitable youth”. Yale required, “...seeing that God is the giver of all wisdom, every scholar, besides private or secret prayer, shall be present morning and evening at public prayer.” Princeton, founded in 1746 and attended by eighty-seven of America’s Founding Fathers, declared: “Cursed be all learning that is contrary to the cross of Christ.”⁶

The education received by Madison, Jefferson, Adams and other Founding Fathers stimulated deep thinking on these questions, gave answers and encouraged – but never demanded – personal commitment of the student to Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. This theme of living out one’s life based on personal conviction rather than political expediency was also expressed in strong terms by Montesquieu in, *The Spirit of Laws*, published in the 1750’s. He explained:

⁴ (Swanson, M. 1992. *The Education of James Madison*, Montgomery: The Hoffman Center)

⁵ (Barton, *Education and the Founding Fathers*.)

⁶ (Ibid.)

Most of the ancients lived under governments that had virtue for their principle; and when this was in full vigor they performed actions unusual in our times, and at which our narrow minds are astonished.

Another advantage their education possessed over ours was that it never could be effaced by contrary impressions. Epaminondas, the last year of his life, said, heard, beheld, and performed the very same things as at the age in which he received the first principles of his education.

In our days we receive three different or contrary educations, namely, of our parents, of our masters, and of the world. What we learn in the latter effaces all the ideas of former. This, in some measure, arises from the contrast we experience between our religious and worldly engagements, a thing unknown to the ancients.⁷

As America began to emerge over the horizon of recognized nations, many visitors from other countries came to see what made America so different from the rest of the world. In 1807, one of these visitors was Edward Kendall from Great Britain. He noted in his three-volume book, *Travels Through the Northern Parts of the United States*, that there were still laws being passed and enforced that encouraged the literacy of the populace. He pointed out that this was done to ensure that every citizen was able to read and know the law and to encourage high morals by the reading of the Bible.⁸

Nearly all of the men who created the government structure of America—extolled by Sir William Gladstone as “the most wonderful work ever struck off at a given time by the brain and purpose of man”—had been trained up under this system of education, recognized its virtues and desired to perpetuate it. On August 7, 1789, President George Washington signed into law a bill that had been passed previously by Congress under the Articles of Confederation. Feeling strongly about this law, Congress wanted to ensure that it had the full force of the new Constitution behind it. This new law (the Northwest Ordinance), outlined, in general, the criteria that a territory had to meet to gain entrance into the union. Section three held that the new state was responsible to ensure that the educational system within the state incorporated religion, morality and knowledge as the base for all instruction; it states: “. . . religion, morality, and knowledge, being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education, shall forever be encouraged . . .” It is significant to note that this bill was made law during the same time that the First Amendment was being discussed and adopted, giving context to the definition of “original intent.”

For any territory wishing to become a state, the process was relatively simple. The territory would petition Congress, Congress would issue an Enabling Act, which authorized the territory to assemble and create a state constitution as long as it was not repugnant to the principles of the Northwest Ordinance. In 1802, just three years after Congress passed the Northwest Ordinance, Ohio was admitted to the union. In reference to education, article eight, section three of the Ohio State Constitution states:

⁷ (Montesquieu, *The Spirit of Laws*, Book 4, Chapter 4)

⁸ (Kendall, *Travels Through the Northern Parts of the United States*, vols. 1-3)

“ . . . religion, morality and knowledge being essentially necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of instruction shall forever be encouraged by legislative provision.”⁹ Fifteen years later in 1817, Mississippi also gained entrance to the union. The Mississippi State Constitution declared: “Religion, morality and knowledge being necessary to good government and the preservation of liberty and happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged in this State.”¹⁰ Eighty-six years after the Northwest Ordinance had been issued as the criteria for entrance of a state into the United States of America, Nebraska sought admittance and was accepted into the union with the State Constitution stating: “Religion, morality and knowledge, however, being essential to good government, it shall be the duty of the legislature to pass suitable laws . . . and to encourage schools and the means of instruction.”¹¹ Many other states also understood the intent of the Founders in creating the Northwest Ordinance and incorporated it into their State Constitutions as well.

It is abundantly clear that in the opinion of many of the founders, the foundation of American society and the strength of its future were inseparably connected to the American system of education enjoyed by five generations of New World Englishmen before Jefferson, and five generations of Americans after him.

A “Jefferson” College

In the summer of 1990, while still an undergraduate at BYU, Oliver did an internship with The Institute for Constitutional Education (ICE) in Cedar City, Utah. Oliver’s major responsibility was developing and running seminars on the Constitution. He helped run nine seminars and conferences that summer—six for youth and three for adults. The Director of the Institute was William Doughty, who became a mentor to Oliver during the twelve-hour days and discussion-filled evenings of the summer seminars.

He loved the exposure to individuals who were making it their life’s work to promote strong families, strong communities and a strong society. Oliver worked as a researcher, a writer and as a director of the “Youth for America” youth conferences. During the school year he continued his research and writing for ICE and produced several monographs on topics of international relations.

A year later, Oliver returned as a speaker to the Institute’s “Summer of 1991” program of youth conferences. On a personal note, I first met Oliver that summer when I joined the Institute staff. Interestingly enough, both Troy Henke and Julie Earl, later Mentors at GWC, were students who attended these youth conferences. By the summer of 1992,

⁹ (Thorpe, F. 1909. *American Charters, Constitutions and Organic Laws of the States, Territories and Colonies Now Forming the United States of America*. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office.)

¹⁰ (Ibid. vol. 4, pp. 2045)

¹¹ (Ibid. vol. 4, pp. 2362)

Oliver was lecturing at both the youth and adult seminars, and had become a favorite speaker. By that time, his studies with Dr. Skousen and Dr. Sills had already begun to have an impact. During that summer, Oliver came across an old Institute brochure advertising one of the conferences with the headline “A College in the Woods” (the institute ran its seminars and conferences in a mountain lodge it owned in the scenic Rocky Mountains of Utah).

The word “college” struck him, and he went immediately to Mr. Doughty’s office. In Oliver’s words: “I said, ‘My studies with Dr. Skousen and Dr. Sills have been the best educational program I’ve ever had. Why can’t we duplicate it for others? We could use Wythe’s specific methods—the classics instead of textbooks, mentors instead of professors, simulations and field experience, world scripture integrated into all studies—and we could offer a great program for college-age students. The biggest feedback we get from youth is that the three-day conferences aren’t enough, that they want more. Let’s give them the whole opportunity. And let’s call it George Wythe College.’”

Mr. Doughty took the idea to the Institute’s Board of Directors and it was approved. Dr. Sills agreed to lead out in the setup of the college. His first task was to meet extensively with Oliver, and together they expanded the plan, made assignments, and created an administrative and academic framework. Dr. Sills took charge of the Administration, and Oliver developed the curriculum from research on George Wythe and John Witherspoon. Mr. Doughty was closely involved with the planning, and the Board approved major policies and class offerings and participated in the planning. Dr. Glenn Kimber, a member of the board, was very helpful owing to his expertise in curriculum design.

The institute offered a special seminar to former youth conference participants, and the institute staff ran a “college week” to announce the college and invite students to attend. More than half of those who attended the seminar, enrolled in the fledgling college (a total of 31 students) and showed up for class on September 21, 1992. Meanwhile, Dr. Sills negotiated an arrangement with Coral Ridge Baptist University in Jacksonville, Florida, paving the way for the creation of a legitimate and unique branch in Utah. George Wythe College was founded in September, 1992 as a branch of Coral Ridge Baptist University and control was transferred from ICE to the new owner, Coral Ridge Baptist Church. Dr. Jeff Burnsed, the Chancellor of Coral Ridge Baptist University, became the Chancellor of George Wythe College under the Coral Ridge Baptist University Board of Regents.

It may be helpful to point out how many Southern Baptist churches operate. Dedicated to saving souls, many of these churches tend to take on their historical role as community schools. They are much less concerned about accreditation or worldly credibility, and much more focused on high quality religious education. Historically, it was these types of church schools that provided most of the quality education in colonial America clear up until the Civil War, and in the South until the first decade of the 20th Century. Even today many of them open a number of schools from the hub of one church. Their focus is most often quality religious and freedom training. Rather than attempting to create

money-making machines or large bureaucracies, or promote professional skills training, they are more likely to operate on a shoe string budget while providing high quality education that cannot be measured by today's national conveyor belt education system.

The Board of Regents appointed Dr. Sills the President of the new college, and Mr. Doughty, Oliver and myself were hired as instructors. The College met in the Institute facility for the first seven months.

II. The Founding

A Classroom

The curriculum that year centered around an inter-disciplinary core class, with the whole student body attending. This core class covered World History, *The Bible*, U.S. History, *The Federalist Papers* and the study of numerous original source documents. Guided group discussion, as opposed to lecture, comprised the format of most classes, with students and faculty alike pre-reading the material and then discussing it each day at length, with lots of discussion about application to current events. This exciting seminar course was supplemented with language courses, a current events simulation class that the faculty and students called "the Situation Room", visiting lectures, and various small-group tutorials. This system formed the basis for the educational model still used at George Wythe College twelve years later.

All classes met in a single classroom. For the first few weeks the classroom was in the garage of the Institute's lodge; then walls were built dividing the garage into four faculty offices, and classes moved to a bigger classroom in the newly constructed but unfinished conference center just a short distance away. As a result of this extremely humble beginning, these classrooms became indelibly etched into the minds of many students and faculty.

The weaknesses of the inaugural year's academic program were simple and predictable: most students chose to attend based on a love of American principles rather than a love of study, so it was difficult to transition to the levels of scholarship necessary for liberal education (the term GWC adopted to describe liberal education designed for serious leadership). And practically the whole student body was made up of Freshman; even the few transfer students were new to this system of education. Two of the three faculty were young and untried. Fortunately, Mr. Doughty provided experience and seasoned mentoring.

The strengths of that first year were enthusiasm and determination. The faculty were going through some of the material for the first time right along with the students, and this

led to an excitement and thirst for knowledge and enthusiasm for hard work that impacted everyone. Each day's classroom was an adventure in learning, and where outside study was lacking, the classes at least were vibrant and fascinating. The Situation Room became the focal point of the school, the one class which united everyone around the need for scholarship; by the end of the school year students were studying hard and the faculty was really leading out.

A newspaper reporter visited George Wythe College, and wrote:

Nestled among the deep snow and majestic pines, a small college flourishes atop Cedar Mountain. George Wythe College opened its doors this year to serve a diversity of students and needs. The college is [a] . . . division of Coral Ridge Baptist University, based in Florida. . . .

President of George Wythe is Dr. Donald N. Sills, who has been a Baptist minister and Christian educator for more than 20 years. "Frankly, I was concerned by the idea of opening a branch of a Baptist school in Utah," Sills said. "We decided right at the beginning that we would not discriminate in any way based on religion. I have been impressed with our LDS employees as well as students, and we haven't had any problems from the LDS Church or its members. This speaks well for interfaith relations. I hope it will continue. . . ."

Each class typically requires 20 hours or more of reading every week. Research, papers and oral presentations are also required. Computers are used in all areas, with units in most of the on-campus housing. Emphasis is placed on knowing how to think and function in society.

"Simply rattling off answers is not enough," Sills said. "Students must be challenged and forced to think on their own. . . ."

George Wythe, for whom the college was named, was the first law professor in America. His students included Thomas Jefferson, [Bishop] James Madison, and Henry Clay. George Wythe College is dedicated to education in the tradition of its inspiriter, to help students find truth, knowledge, wisdom and God.¹²

During this girding up of students and faculty that first winter, it snowed, and snowed and snowed. Duck Creek, Utah, the site of the Institute's mountain retreat, stands at an elevation of 8,600 feet, and the 1992-93 winter was a record year for snowfall. Snow came so early that initial semester that the opening social the first week of classes was almost cancelled due to blizzard conditions. But it was warm inside and the only sufferers were those who had to travel to and from class (only one student and one faculty member didn't live on-site).

¹² Beacham, L. 1993. *Spectrum*. College helps students find truth, wisdom and God. January 23.

But as snowy as Fall term was, the Winter term was the real test. Oliver wrote, "As I remember it, it started snowing on about January 15 and never quit until March 6. I mean, it literally never quit. Except once. One day, I think in late February, a student came running into the room in the middle of my class shouting that it had quit snowing. The students never even looked at me or asked a 'by-your-leave'. They just ran out the door. One minute I was lecturing, the next minute I was staring at an empty classroom. I followed them out and they were hopping around in the snow, throwing snowballs, laughing and playing. It started snowing again in about ten minutes, and everyone filed back into the room where we finished class."

Almost twenty feet of snow amassed; people walked around on snow that was even with the rafters and roofs of the buildings, and entered buildings by digging snow stairways down to the doors.

The snow was good in at least one way: students studied a lot more during Winter term than they had during the Fall. The faculty noticed that students were able to cover two to three times the material. But the snow also had its downside. Half of the students were housed in the older bed-and-breakfast lodge of the retreat center, but the others were housed with a temporary use permit in the adjacent Conference Center that the Institute was building. Although the safety of the students was never at risk, life was disrupted often, as crisis after crisis seemed to plague the construction project. The snow continued and caused numerous problems as they struggled to finish the new building, and even caused lapses in the plumbing and power at the bed-and-breakfast. Classes were cancelled on occasion to employ the entire student body and faculty in various service projects.

To top off a rough first year, one night, three weeks before the end of the term, the propane gas lines feeding the crawl space furnaces of the Conference Center broke under the weight of the accumulated snow. This caused a build up of propane gas in the four foot crawl space climaxing in an explosion that destroyed much of the foundation of the building and caused serious structural damage to the floors, walls, windows and doors. Miraculously, nobody was injured. Several hours of heroic effort followed as faculty and students battled to put out the blaze that was burning under the building and secure the building and inhabitants from further harm. All of the students who had been in the building at the time of the explosion had to be temporarily housed in already crowded conditions in the lodge and nearby cabins. After this episode, the building could not be occupied. In addition to all of the structural damage, both the water and electrical systems were all but destroyed. Suddenly, with twenty feet of standing snow, no water, marginal electricity, and zero degree weather—twenty students were without a home, and school ended early that year with no clear prospect of where or even *if* it would be holding classes in the Fall.

A Decision

Oliver and Rachel DeMille took charge. They went to Cedar City within days of the explosion and found a facility to rent for the College. For the next decade the College was housed at 401 South Main, in the basement section of a professional office building. With the help of some of the students and staff, they loaded all the college's fixtures, furniture and library into the back of a moving truck and a huge horse trailer and hauled it to the new facility. They sent out letters to reassure students that classes would continue in the Fall, and they started recruiting additional students.

Mr. Doughty and I stayed with the Institute to see what they could recover, and Dr. Sills and the DeMilles were left to re-establish the educational program and open the doors for Fall classes in four months. The Institute's budgetary contributions were redirected to salvaging the crippled building, so the College's revenue consisted solely of whatever tuition came in that fall. The financial picture was bleak, to say the least. By July the picture was clear: Dr. Sills could provide part-time involvement at a policy-making level, Oliver and Rachel would be the administration, the faculty, and the staff all for about \$8,000 a year—to be paid to them only after all the other bills were covered and whenever they could collect it.

"I remember standing outside late one sleepless evening looking up at the stars," wrote Oliver. "It was a clear evening with no moon, but the stars were so bright I could see all around the front yard, and I could see the mountains above the tree line. I remember thinking, 'this is crazy! We can't do this. We have no savings. The College has no reserves, and not enough money to cover the bills we already have, much less get any compensation. We can't do this', I said, over and over. 'We can't do this.'"

"The lucrative job offers from last year's recruiters at the university came to mind, along with graduate schools, the Atlantic Council internship, and scholarships I knew I would qualify for and could obtain. Options were still open. And they made so much more sense than this. 'We can't do it,' I said to myself again.

"But that wasn't the issue. I had to face the real question. *Should* we do it? Did it need done? Deep down I knew the answer already, and no matter how I tried to talk myself out of it, the bottom line was that George Wythe's type of schooling needed to be re-established. And no other institution was doing it. People would laugh at us—they already were. And criticize and attack what we were doing. And we certainly couldn't afford to do it. But as hard as this clearly was going to be, nobody else was likely to do it. So I had to. Somebody else could do it better, I knew. Lots of people could do it better. But they weren't, and it was so desperately needed. So I would—whatever it took, however long it took.

“Once I made the decision, I looked back up at the stars. Abruptly, in my imagination I saw a room full of legislators.”

Oliver later related what he pictured at that time:

The Speaker taps the gavel twice and calls for the vote. You sit back in your office chair, turn from the TV, close your eyes and ponder. At home, your family is gathered in the living room, also watching it on television. Your married children and grandchildren watch from their respective homes and places of business around the country. Nearly everyone is watching. The media have been discussing it for weeks, and are now giving a play-by-play account as Congress votes. Suddenly everything goes quiet.

A gasp goes through the House; you hear another ripple down the hall. You sit riveted, eyes wide open, unbelieving. How could this have happened?

You reach for the remote control, but before you can turn it off, you hear a new voice. ‘No.’ The tone is gentle but firm. ‘No,’ it says again. The camera pans the House chamber, and stops on a young Congressman toward the back. He begins to speak. He is quiet, firm, confident. His words are not rhetoric; they are common sense, they are timeless and speak deeply to our condition, to our struggles. You begin to nod your head. He speaks to our time, yet is rooted in history. His words are simple, and his suggestions direct. Other heads nod. He is brief, and ends with a motion.

A strange and familiar emotion fills the hall. Light and truth. You feel it also. The floor stirs awkwardly. Then slowly, very slowly, another stands with courage and seconds the motion. And then another, and soon, another.

A final vote is taken. And while time stands still—a decision is reversed. The course of history changed on a few words.

But words like these take years to learn. Years of struggle and testing. Of right choices, and wrong choices followed by course corrections. Years of intense study, of prayer and devotion. Years of work in the military, in a sales position, in a struggling young home, in a managerial job, or in the risk years of launching a new business. But early lessons learned on the farm or in the boardroom are not forgotten. And the voices of mentors are remembered still.

Truth from the classroom and real life combine, and virtue, wisdom, diplomacy and courage converge to sway the course of history. Not just in the bodies of world power, but in our businesses, communities, schools, courtrooms, and homes.

So much depends on statesmanship.

After imagining this that evening, in Oliver's words, "I walked back into the house and told Rachel I was going to stick it out. She said *we* would stick it out, whatever it took. I really saw that young man, in my mind's eye, and I knew that if we built George Wythe College, men and women like him would get the education they need. I wouldn't quit."

On a Shoestring

The next five years (1993-97) were rewarding but challenging. Oliver became Dr. DeMille, having finished his Ph.D. in Religious Education with Coral Ridge in 1994. As the lone professor, Dr. DeMille taught the core classes each semester, and prepared for them through the year, but especially during the summer. He found that he simply couldn't do this and administrate the school, so he hired a full-time manager. The first Office Manager, Daryl Hainsworth, worked for six months and helped transition the administrative load and systems away from Dr. DeMille. When he moved on to another job, Dr. Sills and Dr. DeMille hired Jodie Johnson for the position. She was also an excellent teacher, and together Dr. DeMille and Ms. Johnson ran the day-to-day classes and operations at the school until 1997. Dr. DeMille determined that three things had to occur to establish George Wythe College on a solid foundation: 1) the academic program had to absolutely shine; 2) a recruiting campaign would be needed to keep the program growing; and 3) a fundraising program was necessary to effectively build the institution for the long term. He also determined that with the current budget, he had two choices: either stop classes for a year and go recruit and fundraise, or put off the recruiting and fundraising until later and focus on establishing a superb educational program. He chose the latter, and spent the next five years focusing all George Wythe College resources into creating the world's best program for building statesmen.

As a result, finances were lean. Two policies were established in early 1994: 1) the College would use absolutely no debt for any reason; and 2) the College budget would be established on a firm business foundation, only spending what it could bring in through its products and services. In theory, this would mean slow but solid and sustainable growth. In practice, it meant bare subsistence living. What the DeMille's and Jodie Johnson did during those five years is almost unbelievable.

The faculty during this period were Dr. DeMille, Jodie Johnson, Rachel DeMille and eventually Andrew Groft. Except for Dr. DeMille, the faculty could best be described as Student-Mentors, as the other three were taking classes to complete their own degrees while they were teaching. The student body fluctuated from twenty to thirty-five students per semester. Numerous part-time faculty were hired on a semester or annual basis, most of them professors at Southern Utah University in Cedar City, and a few from BYU, Dixie College and UNLV (all close enough for a weekly commute). Dr. DeMille taught the seminar courses that all students took, and the Simulations courses, each semester.

Ms. Johnson and Mr. Groft mentored classes, and joined with the part-time faculty in teaching language and other supplementary courses. GWC also sponsored a visiting lecture every two to four weeks during this period, which brought diverse ideas and experts into the college discussion and experience.

A newspaper report from this period summarized:

‘There’s no football team or homecoming royalty, but we think this is one of the most exciting educational opportunities in the nation,’ Dr. Donald N. Sills, president of George Wythe College in Cedar City said. . .

The goal of core classes is to educate all students in the basics including competency in the major areas of math, science, English, foreign language, history, economics, values, philosophy, theology, literature and government. With all classes focusing on the best primary sources as textbooks, the study of scripture and foreign languages is particularly emphasized.

Students are expected to write well, in terms of structure and content. Wythe freshmen are tutored to improve their written language skills and papers with three or more errors are deemed ‘not acceptable.’

Dr. Oliver DeMille, Provost, is quick to counsel students, they are in for “lots of hard work—but not bureaucracy, playing games with the teacher or useless cramming forgotten 10 minutes after the exam book is closed.”¹³

During this period Dr. DeMille began doing some lectures at private and public high schools and colleges and universities in the western U.S. He also lectured at numerous home school conventions, and various radio, television, community events and seminars. Demand and speaker fees gradually increased, and his speeches provided a significant contribution to the meager college budget as well as an opportunity for recruiting. The college grew slowly both in terms of student body and curriculum. All the while, the school was still housed in no more than a 3,000 square foot leased basement level facility.

The Mission

The five-year focus on academics built the college slowly, layer upon layer. In early 1995, a new member of the Advisory Board, Ken Krogue, felt concerned that the college needed a clear mission statement and a strategy to achieve it. He organized and led a retreat of some of the sharpest people he knew. There was a sense of nostalgia for some as the retreat was held in ICE’s mountain lodge. It was held in the original GWC classroom, a bittersweet memory for some of us. The faculty office walls had been torn down and the garage had

¹³ Sappington, Linda. 1994. *Spectrum*. George Wythe College, March 26.

been returned to its original state prior to the GWC days. Attendees at the retreat included Bruce Ackerman, Dr. Oliver DeMille, Rachel DeMille, Shawn Ercanbrack, Jodie Johnson, Ken Krogue, Barbara Tanner and myself.

As Shawn Ercanbrack, one of the participants, later wrote:

In 1995, a small group of educators, professionals, entrepreneurs and business people gathered in a mountain cabin to discuss the nature of statesmanship and how best to cultivate it. Central to their discussion was the future direction of George Wythe College.

Only three years old at the time, George Wythe College had created an educational environment with great promise. By mirroring the structure and philosophical approach to education that made earlier statesmen such as Washington and Jefferson great, George Wythe College had embarked on a path that few had ever followed—that of educating for statesmanship.

The founder of George Wythe College is Dr. Oliver DeMille. During his doctoral studies, Dr. DeMille had asked the question, “What type of education is required to build statesmen the caliber of Thomas Jefferson?”

Dr. DeMille’s research revealed that Jefferson was the product of his mentor, George Wythe, as was James Monroe, Henry Clay, John Marshall and many other early American statesmen. Wythe’s success was evident in the contributions of his graduates: he mentored two United States Presidents, two Supreme Court Justices and numerous Governors, Senators, Congressmen, Ambassadors, Judges and successful Businessmen.

The conclusion was obvious: To develop qualities of statesmanship, one was educated by George Wythe.

Mr. Wythe employed specific educational methods as he mentored his students, and Dr. DeMille had built George Wythe College on Wythe’s model. Dr. DeMille’s later research into the lives of other great men and women such as Gandhi, Lincoln, and Joan of Arc revealed that each had been influenced similarly; that is, by dedicated mentors who employed educational methods similar to those used by George Wythe.

After several days of debate and discussion, the small group gathered about a warm fire reflecting on all it had discovered. George Wythe College was unique. It was in a founding state, yes, but it was one of a kind. The need to cultivate statesmanship was real. And the opportunity was clear: To invest in an institution focused on an inspired mission—that of building statesmen.

Inspiration came, and from those gathered in a mountain retreat was forged a shared vision and the unique mission of George Wythe College:

*To become men and women of virtue, wisdom, diplomacy, and courage
who inspire greatness in others, and move the cause of liberty.*

The results of the Mission Statement retreat were so exceptional that Dr. DeMille asked some of the members to become part of a permanent group that would meet one to three times a year, identify GWC needs and then take on assignments and projects to fulfill those needs. These meetings were held in Cedar City and occasionally by teleconference. Because of the College's fragile financial position, all expenses were covered by the members themselves, with no likelihood of reimbursement. This was a significant hardship on more than one member of the steering committee.

The Chairman of the Steering Committee was Shawn Ercanbrack, and its members included some of the same group as at the first retreat: Bruce Ackerman, Doug Free, Andrew Groft, Jodie Johnson and Ken Krogue and myself. Shawn was a tireless and detail-oriented leader with a strong dedication to the Mission he had helped articulate. In numerous meetings and projects over the course of two years, Shawn led the Committee in completing the following:

A. Refined the Mission Statement

On Shawn's recommendation, the mission statement was changed from "Becoming men and women . . ." to "Building men and women . . ."

B. Motto

The mission statement was abridged after the 1995 Mission Statement retreat into a motto which became part of the GWC logo: "Becoming Statesmen". This was changed in 1997, by suggestion of Shawn Ercanbrack and by review of the Steering Committee, to "Building Statesmen".

C. Strategic Growth Plan

Mr. Ercanbrack and the Committee also developed a Strategic Growth Plan that outlined the fundraising, administrative and growth efforts and strategy of the College. This plan and its tactical guidelines proved invaluable in the development of GWC and continues to provide guidance.

Simultaneously, Mr. Krogue helped create a new corporate image by bringing in the services of Daniel Ruesch and his design company. Together, under the direction of the Steering Committee, they designed the following: a new logo, a new corporate image, and new catalog/marketing materials, etc.

Mr. Krogue also arranged various funding connections with corporations to help support George Wythe College. This was the first direct funding effort of GWC, and brought in approximately \$60,000 over the course of four years.

The Five Pillars

Mr. Ercanbrack's leadership in the Steering Committee also led to the question of how, exactly, does one go about building statesmen. After significant research, the answer was clear. The great statesmen and stateswomen in history had five elements common in their education. The five elements are what George Wythe College delivers, they are George Wythe College's unique contribution to education. The Steering Committee named them, The Five Pillars of Statesmanship.

Mr. Ercanbrack's report to the Committee clarifies how central the Five Pillars are and how closely they relate to the mission of George Wythe College:

Although schools in many nations train students for specialty careers in service and industry, while many universities and private institutions educate for management or leadership, there is a pressing need for an institution whose primary objective is to build statesmen.

Statesmen, like entrepreneurs, think in terms of *inventing*, *innovating*, and *building*. Although they may work for a specific company or government, they do not depend on others for jobs. This is because they are not 'employees' or 'politicians' in the normal sense.

Instead, statesmen are self-directed leaders; they are problem solvers whose abilities and actions inspire greatness in others, transform organizations, and change society with lasting, positive results.

Neither corporate training programs nor traditional modern academic instruction sufficiently prepares individuals to fulfill this unique leadership role.

Statesmanship is a rare commodity. And rarer still, is the institution dedicated to building it. Educating for statesmanship presents unique challenges. Unlike traditional modern academics, the primary emphasis is on developing the student's character. This approach best enables the student to lead and succeed in a broad range of disciplines that contribute to the overall good of society.

The value of a combined character-intellectual education is immense, and its

influence reaches further than virtually any other type of education. But educating for character, and thus for statesmanship, is not easy.

George Wythe College understands the unique challenges presented by this type of education. It has spent nearly a decade researching and developing innovative methods and curricula for educating tomorrow's statesmen. In the College's demanding environment, the student's character is developed and refined as much as his or her competence. The education is rigorous; students learn to ask hard questions, challenge prevailing assumptions, build consensus or stand on principle alone. Above all, the George Wythe College student does not ask what the world has to offer, but rather, assesses needs, takes responsibility and sets out to build, innovate and accomplish. In short, young men and women become statesmen—men and women of virtue, wisdom, diplomacy and courage who inspire greatness in others and move the cause of liberty.

The unique challenges of a statesmanship education require innovative approaches to timeless philosophies. Many of the great men and women of history—from Cicero to Joan of Arc, Washington to Lincoln, Churchill to Gandhi—were prepared through the influence of certain factors. George Wythe College has organized these factors as a single educational system. It is known as *The Five Pillars of Statesmanship™*.

- I. ***Classics*** represent the best mankind has yet produced in science, mathematics, philosophy, religion, history, and art. The centerpiece of classical education is the Holy Bible, the standard against which all other works are measured. Not necessarily texts, classics are works rich in timeless application; masterful creations one learns from each time one returns. To study the classics is to come “face-to-face” with greatness.
- II. ***Mentors*** are essential because character cannot be constructed from the greatest books or works alone. The guidance of a committed, caring and seasoned mentor brings to the student the tempering influences of wisdom, counsel, discipline and accountability. For every Jefferson there is a George Wythe, for every Washington a Colonel Fairfax. Statesmen were, and are, mentored.
- III. ***Simulations*** allow for vicarious decision-making and problem-solving experience in areas such as government, business, even home and family without the risks commonly associated with inexperience. But the root purpose of simulations is to teach the student how to exercise imagination and vision, cardinal hallmarks of every great leader and statesman.
- IV. ***Field Experience***, such as internships and employment, offers students the opportunity to mature as statesmen by applying learned principles to real-world problems with real consequences. Students are taught to reflect on each

consequence for its merit or value, and determine which actions precipitated its outcome. They also record observations and insights daily in a field journal for later study. This discipline of reflecting and recording while in the course of field experience enables the student to mature more completely, learn from mistakes, and make wiser choices in the future.

- V. **God.** Undergirding and overarching all is the certainty that the Creator has purpose in His creation. That rights, reason and liberty derive not from man, but from God. This perspective takes man out of the center of his own existence and defines the statesman as servant rather than master. It simultaneously enshrines free will and individual liberty, under God, as the crowning virtue.

The Five Pillars of Statesmanship TM are used to cultivate in each student four key character traits—traits that are embodied by every true statesman:

1. **Virtue**—first, private virtue, or a deep inner character that rises from the wellspring of excellence and morality; second, public virtue, the willingness to voluntarily sacrifice personal benefit for the good of the family, community, and nation.
2. **Wisdom**—knowledge of the greatest ideas, leaders and events of human history, combined with the practical skill of applying knowledge correctly in the real world.
3. **Diplomacy**—the ability to build bridges, organize and lead teams, work with diverse individuals and cultures, and marshal resources in order to accomplish select strategic and tactical goals.
4. **Courage**—the habit of consistently doing what is right, even in the face of great opposition or danger; having the will to act, then enduring and carrying it through to the end.

The result is an uncommon individual, one whose decisions are rooted in history, based on true principles, and made after carefully considering the long-term impact upon society. These individuals then apply statesmanship to their respective career paths—whether that be in their homes, communities, businesses or governmental bodies.

Then a transformation begins to take place. First among individuals, then organizations, and then society—elevating each to higher, more noble and prosperous states. This is the legacy of statesmanship. Changes in society begin with the individual. This is the vision of George Wythe College.

Since “the philosophy of the schoolroom in one generation will be the philosophy of government in the next”¹⁴, George Wythe College begins in the schoolroom.

¹⁴ Attributed to Abraham Lincoln.

Mr. Ercanbrack's report was revolutionary. Seen in this light, we realized how impactful this type of education could be if we could only create a sustainable environment. The Five Pillars were really the foundation of historical liberal education. The method, or process of implementing the Five Pillars has become known as the Seven Keys of Great Teaching. After implementing these for years on campus, we discovered that there was also real application of these keys, or principles, in the instruction of pre-college youth. The Seven Keys of Great Teaching are:

- Classics, not Textbooks
- Mentors, not Professors
- Inspire, not Require
- Quality, not Conformity
- Structure Time, not Content
- Simplicity, not Complexity
- You, not Them (lead out with an inspiring example)

With these methods and principles firmly established, the George Wythe College system dubbed "Thomas Jefferson Education" was in place and ready to grow.

A New Administration

In August of 1997, Dr. DeMille informed the Board of Directors that the academic program was in place and the school was ready to grow. Three things needed to occur: an expansion of the faculty, the growth of the administration to put the program on a solid managerial foundation, and fundraising. Dr. DeMille was appointed President in early 1999. After the inaugural ceremony, led by out-going President Donald N. Sills, the new President outlined the goals of the next decade: an interim facility, significant expansion of the administration and faculty, a \$5 million endowment, accreditation, and then a full campus. Over the next two years the program grew from a staff and faculty of two full-time and eighteen part-time personnel to twelve full-time and twenty-five part-time. Julie Earl, a graduate of George Wythe College, returned to take a faculty post in 1997. I also took a faculty post in 1998 after working in an Arizona charter school, followed by Mr. Groft (who had left to serve as an executive in a large financial services firm) in 1999. By early 2000, it was decided to develop the actual department of Registrar (Julie Earl); a new Office Manager (Cameron Baxter); a Vice President of Development (Scott Wilson); a Director of Seminars and External Development and Administrative Vice President (Shanon Brooks) to oversee all administration, six additional faculty members and a Provost (Andrew Groft), along with support staff for these leadership roles. This kind of infrastructure was vitally necessary to support the anticipated growth, but it also greatly stretched the financial resources of the fledgling college.

We contemplated expansion with some reserve. If the growth did not come as projected, there would be great financial risk. If we did not expand and create a stronger administrative foundation to service the potential growth, the quality of customer service would suffer terribly. Still, it was a reasonable gamble. The national Y2K scare had passed without crisis, and the United States was experiencing unprecedented economic growth for the tenth year in a row. As the new college president, Dr. DeMille weighed the options and chose to take the risk—growth was essential to survival and the achievement of the mission, and the future looked bright. With the advent of a larger full-time staff on campus, the volunteer Steering Committee was dissolved and several formal committees were created, including:

The Scholarship Committee (made up of full-time faculty members who would serve annual terms), which was given responsibility for the awarding of all scholarship funds.

The Graduation Committee (made up of the Provost and other appointed full-time faculty members who serve rotating terms), which was given responsibility for degree requirements and credit valuation of courses as well as individual graduation requirements and reviews.

The Executive Committee (made of the President, Vice President, Provost and Director of Development), which was given responsibility to oversee the College administration and progress—particularly the articulation and achievement of strategic and tactical goals.

Of course, graduate committees continued to be assigned to specific graduate students, and various other specific project and *ad hoc* committees were used as necessary.

Student growth continued, as did speaking opportunities, recruiting and fundraising, newsletter distribution, the visiting lecture series, and other programs. Students and faculty attended numerous national and international conferences, professional meetings and symposia—put on by a host of organizations. The Simulations program also expanded to running various annual mock Congress and U.N. type meets, both for high school and college teams around the western United States. This was all done with the most meager means imaginable.

The Field Experience program grew, sending students to internships in state capitals, Washington D.C., New York, Los Angeles, Beijing, Rome, Switzerland, Kenya, Paraguay and many other cities and nations—serving in business, academic and governmental internships. For example, consider the report of Susan Roylance, former President of United Families International, a United Nations NGO which used George Wythe College interns at several UN events:

...the students gathered around a table and asked, 'what can we do with the Habitat [a UN document] agenda to improve it?' One of the first things they looked at was that many of the words in the documents were mandatory, that they overlooked national sovereignty and the right of the nation to choose and do what it thinks best for the country. The students counted hundreds and hundreds of these words throughout the document, then took each of them and chose alternatives that could be offered. For example, instead of 'required,' we used 'encouraged,' etc., etc. We prepared flyers, and six George Wythe College interns traveled to New York to the Preparation Committee. And they were wonderful and diligent lobbyists. This was not a trial run; this was for real.

After the PrepCom two of the interns went with us on to Istanbul. And it was a miracle. There was a turning that occurred at the conference that still exists in international conference today. One author described it as 'a paradigm shift.' When I was in New York at the Earth Summit II and viewed that document I was just amazed at the lack of mandatory words, and the generous use of 'encourage' type words that recognize and give full credence to national governments...

That experience has been referred to as 'the miracle of Istanbul'; I refer to it as the miracle of George Wythe College.

Faculty Growth

The great American scholars Russell Kirk and Jacques Barzun both taught that a college or university is as good as its faculty—nothing more, nothing less. And as a Liberty Fund publication entitled *Education in a Free Society* noted, any college president trying to implement a new model of education will likely find his biggest obstacles not in the student body, donors, community, alumni or even among parents—but rather among the faculty. Having pioneered a new educational model—or more accurately, having re-established the historical method of educating leaders—President DeMille was determined to have only the very best mentors as faculty (GWC uses mentors rather than professors).

While many teachers provided high quality instruction and personal mentoring at George Wythe College during the first fourteen years, only a handful became Senior Mentors. A Senior Mentor holds a terminal degree, has proven themselves over years of high-quality experience teaching the classics, and is a master of the George Wythe method of applying The Five Pillars.

Between 1997 and 2001, four Senior Mentors joined the George Wythe College faculty in Cedar City. Andrew Groft was a graduate of George Wythe College who had worked on the faculty during his advanced studies. After graduation, Andrew joined a financial services firm as an executive, was promoted and eventually joined the firm's Board of

Directors. His future looked bright, with financial and leadership opportunities ahead. One day Andrew received a phone call from his old mentor, Oliver DeMille. When he returned the call, Dr. DeMille's words shocked him: "I'd like to extend to you the opportunity to Build Statesmen." Although the logistics were a challenge, Andrew and his wife Leslie were excited by the prospects. Andrew returned to Cedar City and joined the faculty, where he completed his doctoral degree and was later made Assistant Provost and eventually Provost.

Dr. Groft brought a number of improvements to the already demanding academic program. Where Dr. DeMille had emphasized training a few key leaders, Dr. Groft felt everyone was a leader inside—and he created and implemented numerous systems and programs to ensure that all students received the best possible mentoring. Dr. Groft significantly expanded the Simulations program, helping it reach out to hundreds each year instead of dozens. He also helped improve the Internship and Field Experience programs, helping many more students serve in business, government and international internships. Dr. Groft's earlier experience with George Wythe College as an intern at the United Nations and in Istanbul convinced him that field experience was a key part of every student's education, and he led programs to Africa, Europe and other parts of the world.

Dr. Groft instituted the George Wythe College study abroad program, and mentored students traveling and serving in Asia, Africa, Latin America, Europe and North America. Dr. Groft also created the Summer Semester program, giving students the option of studying year-round.

Julie Earl was one of the charter students at George Wythe, helping the school get started in the first three years. She served a religious mission in London, England, before completing her senior year and graduating from GWC. She returned home to Phoenix, Arizona, and had just begun to get involved in local business when Dr. DeMille called her and invited her to join the GWC faculty and build statesmen. "Our budget is very tight," he told her, "so we won't be able to offer a salary." But he asked her to consider it anyway. She did, and with the support of her parents she returned to Cedar City to teach Fine Arts and serve as GWC's first Registrar.

Julie brought a sense of professionalism to the young organization, adding her touch of quality business systems to the whole administration. She was a trouble shooter for systems that needed upgrading, managing staff and creating improved operations in technology, admissions, reception and grading. Julie eventually completed her doctoral degree, became a popular speaker at numerous events in the United States and Canada, and took the lead in developing two powerful programs for GWC: 1) extension courses in Northern Utah, where students can complete their first two years at GWC and master's level students can complete coursework with a local mentor; and 2) Statesmanship Seminars in many western states where students can attend advanced seminars to continue their education.

Dr. DeMille wrote: “Shanon Brooks, supported by his wife Julia, was one of our first instructors, then he moved on to teach for a charter school and later served as the Vice Principal. He had a strong background in management on the east coast and had served honorably in the military. But more importantly, he had the ability to simultaneously be a great mentor and motivator of students and also an effective manager for an organization. Over time he served as Director of External Development, Director of Operations, Vice President, and eventually Chief Operating Officer. During all this time he was one of the students’ favorite mentors. Dr. Brooks introduced our field seminar program, our extension course program, our high school leadership training program, and became a popular speaker in much of the United States and Canada.”

Troy Henke was hired right after his GWC graduation to teach at American Heritage Academy, a charter school in Arizona that was founded by Steve and Vicki Jo Anderson, Vicki Jo herself, being a graduate of George Wythe College. When President DeMille called, he asked Troy to come back to GWC and create a world class mathematics program that would be on par with the already excellent classical approach to history, art, science, government, the humanities, economics, and the other fields of a “liber” liberal arts education. Troy agreed and, along with his wife Katy and their family, came to George Wythe College to help establish an outstanding liberal mathematics program. Dr. Henke later helped found Idaho Leadership Academy, an excellent charter school in Idaho, where as of this writing, Dr. Henke serves as President. This emphasis in classical mathematics and mathematical thinking has been continued by the efforts of Dr. Einar Erickson and Mr. Craig Spitler.

Other faculty members of note include: Wendy Yang, who taught Mandarin and led groups of students to China; Mario and Laurie Lagos, from Mexico, who taught Spanish; David Wallis, Greg Hawkins, Michael Barrett, and Larry Daniel, all attorneys who helped teach case law, legal philosophy, and other topics; Dr. Andrew Allison, author of *The Real Thomas Jefferson*, who has helped with numerous seminars and doctoral studies; Dr. Michael Platt, a graduate of Harvard and Yale, who also studied at Cambridge and who has led several intensive courses on Shakespeare; Mr. Steve Roberge, who taught Greek; Rachel DeMille, who established GWC’s Hebrew program; Dr. Robert Blair, a former BYU Professor of language who helped establish the intensive GWC language study system and taught some of its first courses; Mrs. Debra Bonner, who put her musical expertise to work to use speak level voice training to help prepare great leaders and public speakers; Mr. Harry Bonner, who brought Liberal Studies into the doctoral and political science programs; and Mr. Ron Christensen, who turned the Distance Studies and Online programs into a professional department. There are many others whose service and quality leadership have made a huge impact.

Trial by Fire

By the summer of 2001, with the new President at the helm, with expanded faculty and administration, and with several million-dollar philanthropic pledges, it appeared that George Wythe College was on the verge of significant escalation. Planning toward accreditation and a campus were in full swing, as well as recruiting for major growth. More hiring and expansion was in motion.

Then dawned the morning of September 11, 2001.

We were shocked and sickened with the rest of the nation. Dr. DeMille and I spoke at a seminar in Salt Lake City that happened to have been scheduled for just a few days after 9/11. It was a somber crowd to be sure. With the whole of America we wondered: how would this attack change the nation? Closer to home we worried: how would it impact GWC? As the dust settled, one by one the financial backers who were in the process of funding George Wythe College found themselves in a lean financial position that would not allow them to fulfill their original pledges. Many other schools faced the same concerns.

In Utah, for example, the state legislature cut back on money for education in an effort to tighten its belt. Nationally, colleges and universities almost in unison determined not to increase tuition amounts in anticipation of declining enrollment. George Wythe College followed suit, but suffered declining enrollment in spite of it, as the nation turned inward for a time. This financial reversal spelled big problems for the college. Without government subsidies or church endowments to fund it, GWC found itself unable to make payroll. In February of 2002, the college was forced to lay off its employees in an effort to prevent an accumulation of back pay adding to already mounting debt. Drs. DeMille, Groft, Earl and myself, agreed to stay on without pay until the crisis could be resolved. To stay appeared to be financial suicide. But stay we did. This was a trying time, softened only by the loyalty of our support staff who returned the next day, also without pay, as volunteers to keep George Wythe College alive.

For others, this was a time to expand into different arenas and support statesmanship in new ways. Within a couple of weeks, the full-time faculty, administration and their spouses, met to determine the proper course of action. This turned out to be a very pivotal meeting and was the beginning of financial stability for the college. After laying out our sad situation and voicing some fear for the future, we discussed our options:

1. Let GWC fold
2. Cut back to a skeleton crew and start over
3. Seek out a big funder to bail us out financially

We immediately determined that failure was not an option. We would find a way out of this crisis to fulfill the mission of George Wythe College—no matter how difficult. That was a defining moment. We closed the doors and began to “storyboard” (Walt Disney’s term for brainstorming), with the determination that we would not leave this meeting without a solution. In the end, three major concepts surfaced that would prove to not only solve our mission concerns but also take care of operating expenses: speaking, seminars, and products.

These were not new ideas, and each had already been proven out at some level to be critical vehicles for exporting the mission of GWC, as well as increasing enrollment. What we discovered was that each had untapped potential to provide precious income revenue while continuing to fulfill the mission of statesmanship. This ultimately allowed us to keep quality faculty on campus. Within one year, after months of back breaking hard work, the financial condition of George Wythe College had miraculously improved to the point that we were able to return to our previous level of staffing and keep growing.

That year laid the foundation for a new George Wythe College. The already enthusiastic team of faculty and administration became fully committed during the challenging time after layoffs. And just as important, we established new programs, including extension courses, a fully expanded seminar program operating across North America, a profitably functioning GWC Press, a profitable Audio/Visual Department with a whole line of products, a new series of very popular on-campus seminars for the public, cooperative agreements and contracts with a number of charter and private schools, and a series of corporate speaking contracts. The year began in a financial crisis for a small college focused mainly on one campus for forty students, and ended with programs that would reach nearly thirty thousand participants that year. The central focus was still to deliver the highest quality learning opportunity, and the year’s experiences expanded our vision to make this unique educational model available to thousands in the immediate years ahead.

What began as a discussion of institutional survival (and in a real sense, the financial security of a number of families), turned into an amazing new level of delivering the Thomas Jefferson educational model (another term we coined to describe liber education) more effectively and to more individuals—a punctuated evolution we could not have imagined or foreseen.

Site Selection

Growth continued and the college began to develop plans to move from its rented facility on 401 South Main Street in Cedar City to a permanent campus. As the expense of such an endeavor became apparent, the Board of Directors and President’s office determined that an all-out fundraising effort was necessary. This was launched on October 4, 2000 and

continues as of this writing. As part of this process, the question of where to build the campus became paramount.

A Site Selection Committee visited 74 cities in North America. Two types of criteria were established by the Board: Factors necessary in building statesmen, and factors helpful in building a viable college business organization. Based on the site selection criteria, the initial list of 74 locations was narrowed to the following:

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| 1) Boise, Idaho | 9) Mancos, Colorado |
| 2) Cedar City, Utah | 10) Midway, Utah |
| 3) Cortez, Colorado | 11) Monticello, Utah |
| 4) Durango, Colorado | 12) Prescott, Arizona |
| 5) Flagstaff, Arizona | 13) Rock Springs, Wyoming |
| 6) Heber, Utah | 14) Williams, Arizona |
| 7) Laramie, Wyoming | 15) Enterprise, Utah |
| 8) Logan, Utah | |

The sites were further narrowed by giving extra weight to majesty of terrain, climate, and local culture. The 8 finalists were:

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| 1) Cedar City, Utah | 5) Midway, Utah |
| 2) Durango, Colorado | 6) Monticello, Utah |
| 3) Enterprise, Utah | 7) Prescott, Arizona |
| 4) Flagstaff, Arizona | 8) Williams, Arizona |

The following data was then gathered on each:

- Airport
- Interstate
- Property values
- Cost of living
- Religious population
- Population
- Elevation
- Weather
- Hotels
- Restaurants
- Stores, malls, shopping
- Colleges
- Public schools and test scores
- Private schools
- Home school population
- Home school laws
- Churches available

- College laws
- Taxes
- Agriculture
- Industry
- Businesses
- Small farm housing
- Attractions, resorts, parks
- Professional theater
- Community arts programs
- Museums
- Libraries
- Student jobs

The final recommendations of the Site Selection Committee to the Board were, in alphabetical order:

- Cedar City, Utah
- Durango, Colorado
- Flagstaff, Arizona
- Midway, Utah
- Prescott, Arizona

The decision of the Board was to build the campus in Cedar City, Utah. As part of this process, the Board noted three key items:

First, in comparing the final alternatives (Cedar City, Durango, Flagstaff, Midway, and Prescott) and all of the other possible sites, the Board determined that George Wythe College's ten year history in Cedar City was a significant benefit which outweighed most minor concerns.

Second, an earlier tentative decision to build the campus in Enterprise, Utah was reversed because of feedback from various sources that the public image of Enterprise and other small towns in Southern Utah was tainted with the stigmas of "right wing radicals" and/or "polygamous groups".

Also, follow-up surveys to the early feedback indicated that while "Southern Utah", "Enterprise, Utah", and nearly all unknown or very small towns in Southern Utah carry these stigmas, they were not found to be attached with "St. George" or "Cedar City". The St. George image was firmly tied to resort and retirement, while the Cedar City image was overwhelmingly "Shakespeare", and to a lesser extent "national parks and recreation."

Third, the major drawback to a Utah location was felt in those market sectors where the public image of "Mormon" is negative. The Board felt that this would likely impact some

potential donors, students and public relations. Certainly, in this matter, the alternative sites in Colorado and Arizona were very attractive.

The Board weighed this factor against the expense and upheaval of moving the college from its nine-year home to another location. The decision was made that, given the critical fundraising period ahead in the next 20 years, the moving of the entire faculty, staff, student body and community relationships would be an undue burden on the program.

Cedar City, Utah was announced as the campus location on August 15, 2001.

Independence

By November of 2001, it became clear to the leadership of Coral Ridge Baptist Church and the executive team at George Wythe College that GWC was rapidly moving beyond the arena of religious studies and the church ministry. President DeMille's administration was planning toward major expansion, accreditation and more visible statesmanship training, and Dr. Burns saw that it was time for GWC to become independent. Anticipating this move, the GWC executive team had established the George Wythe Foundation in 1999, with the initial focus of raising funds for schools promoting Jefferson/Wythe type education. In 2001 Coral Ridge agreed to sell George Wythe College to the George Wythe Foundation, and ownership was officially transferred on January 1, 2002.

The leadership role was transferred from the Coral Ridge Baptist University Board of Regents to the George Wythe Foundation Board of Directors on that same date. The new board consisted of Dr. Donald N. Sills, Chairman; Shawn Ercanbrack, a business executive (at the time attending Wharton in Pennsylvania); Kelvin Moss, a businessman and banker from Sacramento, California; Dr. Oliver DeMille; Dr. Andrew Groft, Provost of GWC; Rachel DeMille; and Mark Siljander, a former U.S. Congressman and U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations. A new Executive Team was also organized, consisting of: President Oliver DeMille, myself as Vice President, Andrew Groft as Provost, and Julie Earl as Registrar.

With new ownership and leadership, George Wythe College was ready to use its independent status to move more quickly toward its goals. To meet accreditation and Utah state registration guidelines, GWC limited the numerous degree programs that had been offered under Coral Ridge's management down to four specific degrees: the Bachelor of Arts in Statesmanship, with several minors offered; the Master of Arts in Education; the Master of Arts in Political Economy; and the Ph.D. in Constitutional Law.

Academic Quality

Mentoring and learning has improved steadily since that first class on the mountain in 1992. Each generation of students raised the bar for itself and left a higher standard for incoming students. This consistent raising-of-the-bar occurred even when the administration faced serious challenges. The true quality of the learning environment and the standard of student work can best be judged by those who are actually the students.

Here are a few responses from on-campus students when asked to define their experience at GWC:

Kimberly Wright – Transfer Student 2004, Sandy, Utah

I am a freshman at George Wythe College. I went to a community college for a year and a half before this, but I didn't feel that I was doing anything worthwhile. I was introduced to GWC by my sister. I attended a seminar and knew this was the school I wanted to attend. I have never been so challenged, or learned so much in my life. I honestly have gained more knowledge in this year than in all my years of public schooling. Here you are pushed to your limit and then forced to push your limits even farther. Here I have the opportunity to be great. I am taught to find, discover, and ask questions. My dad always says people are given answers before they ever have a question. I now have so many questions that I am really excited to find answers or more questions. I love studying and receiving this education. It is a life changing experience. I now have goals and ideas for my life. This school is preparing me for my life's mission. GWC prepares you for a life of thinking.

Sarah McIlrath – Senior, Blairsville, Georgia

Quite frankly, when I saw the list of books to be read in each class in the catalog, I was sold. I didn't care that the school was 3,000 miles away in Utah (I grew up reading about wagon trains headed west and thought it was romantic). I didn't notice it was in a basement; all I noticed was that people were reading, talking, and thinking, but not necessarily in that order.

Jason Gardner – Freshman, Taylorsville, Utah

The thing that most stands out about George Wythe College is the general excitement for learning. I have never been anywhere or interacted with more people who are so animated and dedicated to learning and making a difference in the world outside the classroom.

Suzie Ludlow – Senior, Beaverton, Oregon

After high school, I decided against attending college because I didn't want to waste my time learning facts that had no relevance to my life. Then I found George Wythe College.

School no longer was a task. Learning became a way of life, changing my life. My whole outlook on the world fuller and deeper, for I know I have a purpose. George Wythe College taught me that.

Frederick Murray – Junior, Yelm, Washington

In order to make a lasting difference in the 21st century, a leader must obtain an education that far exceeds his leadership capabilities; in short, a statesmanship education. This education is found at George Wythe College.

Chelsea Goodrich – Senior, Mountain Home, Idaho

I am at George Wythe College right now because God brought me here. It really is that simple, and even if He hadn't, I would want to get my education here for some other pretty darn good reasons. One is that it challenges me and pushes me beyond my pre-established limits. It challenges my thinking, my beliefs, makes me put everything to the test, take nothing for granted, and accept nothing at face-value. The people here inspire me to work harder, reach farther, and be a more committed, focused, synergistic person. There are pivotal things happening here and I am so blessed and so excited to be a part of them. George Wythe College has and continues to help shape me into what I am meant to be and do and I wouldn't trade that for anything.

Brent Longhurst – Freshman, Chihuahua, Mexico

My dad always told me stuff like: "You are going to forget most of what you learn in school, the best thing that you can do is learn HOW to learn. If the only thing you learn is how to learn it will be worth it." Or "Don't let your school get in the way of your education." Ever since I was young I had a feeling that I had a great personal mission to fulfill. When I looked at what I was getting from the contemporary education system I was not satisfied. I truly felt that I did not know how to learn very well, and what little I did know about learning I had learned on my own, sometimes even neglecting or avoiding school to be able to have these experiences. I truly felt that my schooling was getting in the way of my education, and I was therefore determined to seek my education in other ways...

And then I was introduced to George Wythe College. I learned about Classics and Mentors and about how the greatest men of history were trained. I knew that this was what I was looking for in an education for life. I was so excited about it that I

made almost everyone I talked to about it excited too. But some people thought I was overly excited and they were afraid that I would be let down when I started school. You can ask my wife about that; it's not true. I have told her two or three times that it's even better than I thought it would be. I am excited that I am not learning worthless facts. I am learning from the greatest thinkers of all time. I am learning to think like them. I have already noticed a difference in who I am. I am BECOMING a better person. I know that my dad is proud of me. My schooling at George Wythe does not interfere with my education; I am now in an environment where I am learning how to think effectively. Everything I learn has application to myself as a citizen, and as a leader in my current roles in business and family life.

My wife and I have made many sacrifices to move our family to Cedar City so that I could come to George Wythe College, and I have found it to be a true sacrifice. The definition of sacrifice I am using is "giving up something you want for something better." I am grateful for a school that trains leaders. School here is not easy, it is very hard, but I know that I have a mission to fulfill and, in a large part thanks to George Wythe College, I feel I am making great progress towards doing so. I always knew I could make a difference, now I am learning how to do so.

Lydia Hepworth – Junior, Chico, CA

As a student at George Wythe College, I study at least 40 hours a week and spend another 12 hours or more in class. A friend of mine recently asked, "Why on earth do you study so hard? You could easily get by on a couple of hours a day, you know, and have time for life."

At first I didn't know how to explain my urgency to him. There are just too many good reasons to get a great education! But what it all comes down to is this:

I am a child of God. He has sent me here for a purpose. My part in his work, whatever it is, will require diligent preparation if I am to do it well. And that preparation *must* include virtue, wisdom diplomacy, courage—and God. This is the time to prepare. And, for me, this is the place to prepare. George Wythe College is the only school I know of where I can find mentors who have studied great classics themselves and whose purpose is to inspire and direct me in my studies. They know what it means to have a vision and to sacrifice for a mission, and in the last two and a half years they've taught me how to find my own—and given me a taste of what any noble purpose requires: a whole lifetime of dedicated effort!

In effect this is the best answer I can give my concerned friend: "This is my life. Already it is the most challenging and thrilling thing I've ever done, and it is only just the beginning!"

Hillary W. Reynolds – Freshman, Bountiful, Utah

I love the smaller class size, more personal interaction with the teachers, and having a mentor to help me in my studies. It helps me to get the most out of my education, to really make it mine and own it.

While here I have become very excited for a life-long learning experience. I have tasted what learning is, what it really is, and I now have a desire to never stop learning; to see what is not seen; to think differently, to live differently.

It has actually changed the conversations I have, my relationships with friends and family, and the way I view the world and the role I play in it.

Montana Nielsen – Freshman, Blackfoot, Idaho

Since I've been here at George Wythe, I've had to face some of my greatest weaknesses. But as I've found those weaknesses, I've had mentors there to help me every step of the way. They've pushed me, supported me, and guided me in finding the answers I need to become a better person. In the semester and a half I've been here, I've learned more about myself than I thought possible.

Jenessa Benson – Transfer Student 2004, Provo, Utah

Before I came to George Wythe College, most of my education consisted of regurgitated facts, and I was really good at it. But since I've been here I've been learning what education really consists of and how to truly think. My experiences here have really opened my eyes. I never thought I could read for so long, dig so deep, or study so hard. This school pushes you to the limit, it's awesome!

Stephen D. Palmer – Transfer Student 2003, Spokane, Washington

George Wythe College teaches how to think, as opposed to traditional schools I have attended, which taught me *what* to think. At GWC, I don't feel cramped and stifled by dogmatic, egocentric professors who feel threatened by debate and disagreement with their views. Rather, our mentors welcome and embrace free and open debate; my critical thinking ability is increased, and my ability to think abstractly and philosophically is enhanced.

Azul Uribe – Freshman, Dallas, Texas/Cancun, Mexico

George Wythe College is the least selfish school I know of, which is the reason I'm here. It shows that there is a bigger role for everyone and that you are not here for a dead end, solitary profession that would only benefit you. It gives you the tools to accomplish a bigger mission for the benefit of the world around you, making you an instrument much more capable in doing what is virtuous and beautiful. It gives

you the chance to be a true individual, and be something bigger than yourself. It is the best school ever!

Impact

In the three years after becoming independent, GWC saw a tremendous increase in interest—both in terms of applications/enrollments and also in philanthropy. Moving from purely academic studies to application, a number of the students have tried their hand at lecturing in the field seminars held in the U.S. and Canada. More and more non-traditional students showed interest in continuing their education, until we were moved to create a full blown extension program all throughout northern Utah. Outside of Utah, groups in three other states and one Canadian Province demanded a series of Statesmanship Seminars as a follow-up to the Face to Face with Greatness Seminars held there earlier. A number of investors purchased homes in Cedar City to provide housing specifically for GWC students.

In 2004 George Wythe College held over 58 seminars, participated in 12 speaking engagements, and delivered 18 extension courses, not to mention enrolling 137 students for the Fall 2004 semester (on campus and extension courses) and 129 distance students—for a combined student body of 266. The Core and Love of Learning Seminar held in July in Cedar City exceeded our expectations with over 390 attendees, and this was followed by the First Annual Alumni and Friends Gala where the new interim building was announced and the building fundraiser was kicked off. Within four weeks, pledges and cash donations amounting to over \$300,000 had been received. George Wythe College could boast active programs in China, Mexico, Canada and christened its European Student Abroad Program in 2005 with a month long tour for 92 students and faculty in June, 2005. On January 10th, 2005, we occupied the new campus of George Wythe College in the Providence Center in Cedar City. The public reaction was overwhelming. Major funding campaigns were in motion for accreditation, the endowment and the permanent campus.

An excerpt from the 2004 Chief Operating Officer report to the President and Board of Directors details the kind of development George Wythe College experienced that year:

- Upgraded the website
- Upgraded all computers and software to run Microsoft XP Office
- Replaced and upgraded all computer networking cables and supporting equipment
- Hired a Webmaster/Technology Developer to increase our web presence
- Retained a more business-oriented accounting firm

- Purchased new database and administrative software designed for small colleges
- Sent four staff to Boston for a week to train on this software
- Began the development of a paperless Admissions and Registrar system to support our new “Next Day” customer service policy
- Hired five more support staff, an assistant bookkeeper and an assistant Admissions Officer
- Began development on a total gateway internet access – all seminar and On-campus, Distance and Extension registration and payment will be possible online
- Began relationships with other entities, partnering in the development of scholarship funding
- Stimulated the development of a GWC Alumni Association with the express purpose of promoting and funding GWC needs
- Developed a close relationship with a conference retreat center to be renamed in the Spring of 2005: “Jeffery L. Doughty – Center for World Leadership – George Wythe Mountain Center”

Having said all of this, providing the highest quality academics on-campus was still and always will be the primary focus. Some of the biggest challenges ahead for GWC were obvious, and have already been mentioned: endowment, accreditation and campus construction. But the greatest constraint on GWC growth is less obvious. As stated above, George Wythe College openly and purposely chose to adopt liber education, the training of citizen-leaders and great statesmen, as its central purpose. Unlike professional training universities, Great Books colleges emphasize the quality of the mentor-student relationship above all else. This requires a high number of mentors, at least 1 for every 15 students and more ideally 1:8. It also demands mentors, not professors. This is very challenging in a world where few colleges or universities use the mentorship method. The fastest way to lose the quality of the newly re-pioneered Wythe system would be to turn the classrooms over to conveyor belt trained professors. George Wythe College has thus determined to maintain 60% of the faculty as GWC graduates. Excellent teachers from the conveyor belt system are trained by team teaching for several semesters until they have mastered the mentorship approach. This demands a slower growth pattern, but helps ensure the dominance of the mentorship method and maintain the extremely high quality that has become George Wythe College’s trademark to all who know the program.

III. A Growing Institution

Faculty

Ever concerned with the quality of the faculty, Dr. Andrew Groft hired two new full time mentors in the Fall of 2005: Mr. Nels Jensen and Dr. Shane Schulthies. Mr. Jensen earned his B.A. in Statesmanship from George Wythe College in 2003 and his M.A. in Political

Economy the following year. Serious and thoughtful, Mr. Jensen quickly became a favorite mentor for many of our students. Dr. Schulthies, a tenured professor from a major western institution, with a B. A. in Athletic Training from Brigham Young University, a M.A. in Physical Therapy from Texas Women's University and a Ph.D. in Exercise Science from BYU, was praised for his academic innovations by his previous institution's tenure committee. He was recruited to GWC in 2004 after attending a seminar and being exposed to the principles of *A Thomas Jefferson Education*. Although he had found a new home at GWC and loved the mentorship approach, it was only after two team-teaching semesters and one semester on his own that he was really comfortable with this new style. He said, "The students here are amazing. It is very different from the typical American University, perhaps that is why I like it so much."

Management

In the Spring of 2006, Shanon Brooks was appointed Chief Executive Officer to oversee all business affairs of George Wythe College. By this time the school had eleven administrative departments, each with its own director: **Registrar** – Russell Skouson, **Admissions** – Dan Ralphs, **Operations** – Jillayne Thomas, **Event Coordinator** – Symbria Patterson, **Registrations** – Tressa Roberts, **Internet Technologies** – Nels Jensen, **Distance Studies** – Erin Reynolds, **GWC Press** – Montana Nielson, **Finance** – David Rees, **Philanthropy** – Carrie Sorensen and **Special Assistant to the CEO** – Gary Arnell. Assisting them were a number of support staff who put in many extra hours helping to shoulder the work load during the Fall, Winter and Spring of the 2005-2006 academic year.

Administrative training began in earnest in December of 2005. The administrative team had determined that they were going to significantly upgrade the operations and systems at GWC in spite of the limited resources. Two-day trainings were followed by hours of systems interfacing and "decoupling" sessions; workshops designed to find overlap and extra steps in individual systems and interfacing systems. One-on-one sessions with the COO were followed-up closely by the Director of Operations. Feedback mechanisms were put into place and much of the feedback was acted upon. IT and other departments held New Technology meetings to see if part of the existing processes could be replaced efficiently with new software. All financial and student records were scanned, creating a virtually paperless system. A small school (up to 3,000 students) administrative software, was instituted in earnest during this same period. All of this, while maintaining normal operations and accommodating new growth. The administrative team, using the lessons from Jim Collin's *Good to Great*, developed their own "hedgehog concept" (an ideal by which all operations and activities are measured) consisting of three goals: 1) Create Perfect Systems, 2) Make Zero Mistakes and 3) Always Deliver on our Promise. These three ideals it was decided, when mastered, would put GWC on a whole new plane of customer service and quality administration.

Another challenge that we thought was going to be solved by moving to the new campus in early 2005 was having enough room to grow. Two weeks after we moved in we discovered that although we had doubled our facility space, we were already near capacity. At the time of this writing, we are putting together an Expanded Facilities Use Schedule to accommodate the 180 students on campus (almost double the standard capacity for this building).

Goals

As we consider the future, allow me to detail our goals for the next decade:

- Securing another building to accommodate the demand of student enrollment
- Accreditation by 2008
- Acquiring 400 acres for a permanent campus
- Hire 25 more full time mentors
- Raising tuition to \$6,000 per semester
- Full time 1st phase operations on the new University campus with 300 + students enrolled on campus
- Building the Benito Juarez Perpetual Endowment to 50 million
- Grow Wokh-sa-pe Pte San Philanthropic Society to 10 annual events

Conclusion

Of course, the truest test of an educational institution is the education of its students. We invite any and all to visit George Wythe College soon, to talk to the students and faculty, to attend a class or a seminar and experience this unique educational institution firsthand. If you are like the thousands who have visited in the past, you are sure to have a powerful experience. You may be unfamiliar with the goals or methods of GWC, but you are sure to be amazed by the level of learning you will witness. We believe that you will see the most vibrant and exciting educational environment you have ever experienced. You will see eighteen-year-old freshmen dialoging like law school seniors or graduate students. If you question them, you will be amazed by their level of maturity, knowledge and wisdom. Attend a class of graduate students and you will witness levels of discussion, learning and application of ideas to real-world solutions beyond anything typically found in modern academia. We invite you to come and witness for yourself this unique, growing, new college model that is unlike anything modern education—traditional or non-traditional, religious or secular—is offering.

In the fifteen years since its inception, George Wythe College defined and pursued a unique purpose—that of building statesmen. It established and articulated its mission: “To build men and women of virtue, wisdom, diplomacy and courage who inspire greatness in

others and move the cause of liberty.” It organized and proved its educational model, *The Five Pillars of Statesmanship*. It tested and refined its administrative systems and processes. It weathered storms and obscurity, and continued to improve. It fully outlined and polished its curriculum, which can be studied in detail in the online catalog (www.gwc.edu). It accelerated its rate of growth, established various departments, committees, programs, and services. Most importantly, it is training perhaps the best cadre of statesmanship education mentors that exists in the 21st Century. As President DeMille said in 2005, “Never has there been a greater need in our world for statesmen, and never has there been an institution as well prepared to build statesmen. The need for statesmen is growing on a truly international scale, and your personal education will determine how well you accomplish your mission. Is your education on par with the mission you were born to achieve?”